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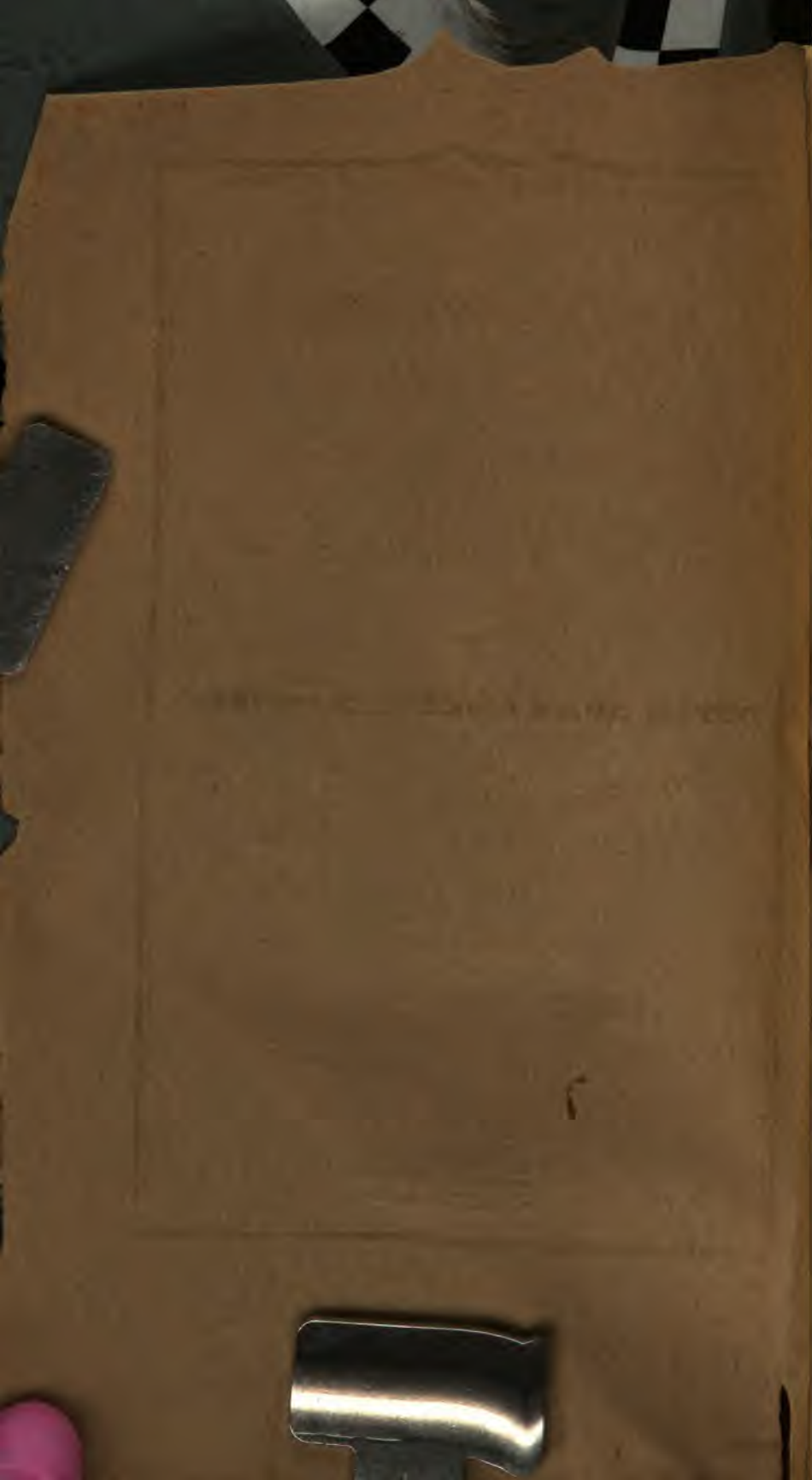
ON THE

**DUTIES OF AN AMERICAN CITIZEN.**

DELIVERED ON FAST-DAY, APRIL 7, 1825.

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Printed by James Loring.



**THE DUTIES OF AN AMERICAN CITIZEN.**

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**TWO DISCOURSES.**

DELIVERED IN THE

**First Baptist Meeting House in Boston,**

on Thursday, April 7, 1825.

THE

**Day of Public Fast.**

---

By FRANCIS WAYLAND, JUN.

PASTOR OF THE FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH IN BOSTON.

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## S E R M O N I.

LUKE XXI. 25.

AND THERE SHALL BE UPON THE EARTH, DISTRESS OF NATIONS WITH  
PERPLEXITY.

THE season has arrived, my brethren, when in conformity with the usages of our forefathers, we are assembled to supplicate the blessing of God on the labours of the advancing year. Custom has permitted that on such occasions, the minister of religion, digressing somewhat from the path of his ordinary duty, should exhibit to his hearers, some truths not expressly revealed in the gospel of Jesus Christ. He is allowed to select a subject, which may be rather of national interest, and is commanded to abstain only from such discussion, as would enkindle those feelings of party animosity, to which a free people, in the present imperfect condition of human nature, must always be liable.

If, then, I should on this day direct your attention to a subject somewhat unlike those which you are accustomed to hear from this sacred place, I trust the example of wiser and better men will plead for me an apology.

But I find in the occasion that has called us together, an apology, with which I must confess myself far better satisfied. We have come here as citizens of the United States, to implore the blessing of God upon our common country. At such a time, it cannot be unsuitable to inquire, how may the interests of that country be promoted? The destinies of this, are intimately connected with those of other nations, and it surely becomes us to ascertain the duties which that connexion imposes upon us. I remember that on every question decided in this community, each one of you has an influence. I am addressing an assembly, whose voice is heard through the medium of its representatives, not only in our halls of legislation, and in our cabinet, but throughout the legislatures and the cabinets of the civilized world. In the attempt, then, to enlighten you upon any of those great questions, on which the well-being of our country, as well as other countries, is virtually interested, I seem to myself to be discharging a duty not improperly devolving upon a profession, which is expected to watch with sedulous anxiety, every change that

can have a bearing upon the moral or religious interests of a community. Impressed with these considerations, I shall proceed to offer you some reflections, on what appears to be the present intellectual and political condition of the nations of Europe; the relations we sustain to them; and the duties which devolve upon us, in consequence of these relations.

I shall this morning direct your attention to some reflections upon THE PRESENT INTELLECTUAL AND POLITICAL CONDITION OF THE NATIONS OF EUROPE.

You are doubtless aware, that society throughout Christendom, has been undergoing very striking alterations since the era of the Reformation, and the invention of the printing press. The effects of this new impulse, which was then given to the human mind, have been every where visible. The attempt to delineate it would require a volume, instead of a paragraph. It will only be possible here to state, that it has been produced by the more universal diffusion of the means of information; it has been characterized by more unrestrained liberty of thinking; and has every where resulted in elevating the rank, and improving the condition, of what are generally denominated the lower classes of society.

But it must be obvious to all of you, that especially within the last fifty years, the intellectual character of the middling and lower classes of society throughout the civilized world has materially improved, and that the process of improvement is at present going forward with accelerated rapidity. A taste for that sort of reading, which requires considerable reflection, and even some acquaintance with the abstract sciences, is every day becoming more widely disseminated. And not only is the number of newspapers multiplying beyond any former precedent, but it is found necessary to enlist in their service a far greater portion of literary talent than at any other period.\*

For this increase of the reading and thinking population of Europe at this particular time, many causes may be assigned. It is owing, in part, to that slow but certain progress, which the human mind always makes after it has once commenced the career of improvement. It may also have been considerably accelerated by the various wars, which have of late so frequently desolated the continent. The momentous events to which every campaign gave birth, have quickened the desire of intelligence in every class of society, and taught men more or less to reflect upon the principles which led to so universal commotions. And

\* Note A.

besides this, the range of information among those attached to the army must have been materially enlarged by visiting other countries, and becoming in a considerable degree acquainted with their inhabitants, and familiar with their institutions.

And here truth obliges us to state, that this melioration owes much of its late advancement to the pious zeal of Protestant Christians. Desirous to extend the means of salvation to the whole human race, these benevolent men have laboured with perseverance and success, not only to circulate the Bible, but to enable men to read it. Hence have arisen the British and Foreign Bible Society, the British and Foreign School Society, the Baptist Irish Society, the multiplied free schools, and the innumerable Sabbath schools, which are so peculiarly the glory of the present age of the church. And surely it is delightful to witness the disciples of Him, who went about doing good, thus girding themselves to the work of redeeming their fellow men from ignorance and sin. O it is a goodly thing to behold the rich man pouring forth from his abundance, and the poor man casting in his mite; the old man directing by counsel, and the young man seconding him by exertion; the matron visiting the prison, and the young woman instructing the Sabbath school; and all pledging themselves, each one to the other, that, God helping

them, this world shall be the better for their having lived in it. The effects of these exertions are every year becoming more distinctly visible. In a short time, if the church is faithful to herself, and faithful to her God, what are now called the lower classes of society will cease to exist; men and women will be reading and thinking beings, and the word *canaille*, will no longer be applied to any portion of the human race within the limits of civilization.

In connexion with these facts, we would remark, that in consequence of this general diffusion of intelligence, nations are becoming vastly better acquainted with the physical, moral and political conditions of each other. Whatever of any moment is transacted in the legislative assemblies of one country, is now very soon known, not merely to the rulers, but also to the people of every other country. Nay, an interesting occurrence of any nature cannot transpire in an insignificant town of Europe or America, without finding its way, through the medium of the daily journals, to the eyes and ears of all Christendom. Every man must now be, in a considerable degree, a spectator of the doings of the world, or he is soon very far in the rear of the intelligence of the day. Indeed, he has only to read a respectable newspaper, and he may be informed of the discoveries in the arts, the discov-

sions in the senates, and the bearings of public opinion all over the world.

The reasons for all this, as we have intimated, may chiefly be found in that increased desire of information, which characterizes the mass of society in the present age. Intelligence of every kind, and specially political information, has become an article of profit; and when once this is the case, there can be no doubt that it will be abundantly supplied. Besides this, it is important to remark, that the art of navigation has been within a few years materially improved, and commercial relations have become vastly more extensive. The establishment of packet ships between the two continents has brought London and Paris as near to us as Pittsburg and New-Orleans. There is every reason to believe, that within the next half century, steam navigation will render the communication between the ports of Europe and America as frequent, and almost as regular, as that by ordinary mails. The commercial houses of every nation are establishing their agencies in the principal cities of every other nation, and thus binding together the people by every tie of interest; while at the same time they are furnishing innumerable channels, by which information may be circulated among every class of the community.

Hence it is that the moral influence, which nations are exerting upon each other, is greater than it has been at any antecedent period in the history of the world. The institutions of one country, are becoming known almost of necessity to every other country. Knowledge provokes to comparison, and comparison leads to reflection. The fact that others are happier than themselves, prompts men to inquire whence this difference proceeds, and how their own melioration may be accomplished. By simply looking upon a free people, an oppressed people instinctively feel that they have inalienable rights; and they will never afterwards be at rest, until the enjoyment of these rights is guaranteed to them. Thus one form of government, which in any pre-eminent degree promotes the happiness of man, is gradually but irresistibly disseminating the principles of its constitution, and from the very fact of its existence, calling into being those trains of thought, which must in the end revolutionize every government within the sphere of its influence, under which the people are oppressed.

And thus is it that the field in which mind may labour, has now become wide as the limits of civilization. A doctrine advanced by one man, if it have any claim to interest, is soon known to every other man. The movement of one intellect, now sets in motion the intellects of millions. We may

now calculate upon effects not upon a state or a people, but upon the melting, amalgamating mass of human nature. Man is now the instrument which genius wields at its will; it touches a chord of the human heart, and nations vibrate in unison. And thus he who can rivet the attention of a community upon an elementary principle hitherto neglected in politics or morals, or who can bring an acknowledged principle to bear upon an existing abuse, may, by his own intellectual might, with only the assistance of the press, transform the institutions of an empire or a world.

In many respects, the nations of Christendom collectively are becoming somewhat analogous to our own Federal Republic. Antiquated distinctions are breaking away, and local animosities are subsiding. The common people of different countries are knowing each other better, esteeming each other more, and attaching themselves to each other by various manifestations of reciprocal good will. It is true, every nation has still its separate boundaries and its individual interests; but the freedom of commercial intercourse is allowing those interests to adjust themselves to each other, and thus rendering the causes of collision of vastly less frequent occurrence. Local questions are becoming of less, and general questions of greater importance. Thanks be to God, men have at last begun to

understand the rights, and feel for the wrongs of each other. Mountains interposed do not so much make enemies of nations. Let the trumpet of alarm be sounded, and its notes are now heard by every nation whether of Europe or America. Let a voice borne on the feeblest breeze tell that the rights of man are in danger, and it floats over valley and mountain, across continent and ocean, until it has vibrated on the ear of the remotest dweller in Christendom. Let the arm of oppression be raised to crush the feeblest nation on earth, and there will be heard every where, if not the shout of defiance, at least the deep-toned murmur of implacable displeasure. It is the cry of aggrieved, insulted, much-abused man. It is human nature waking in her might from the slumber of ages, shaking herself from the dust of antiquated institutions, girding herself for the combat, and going forth conquering and to conquer; and wo unto the man, wo unto the dynasty, wo unto the party, and wo unto the policy, on whom shall fall the scath of her blighting indignation.

v. n.

Now it must be evident, that this progress in intellectual cultivation must be operating important changes in the political condition of the nations of Europe. This moral power has been applied almost exclusively to one portion of the social mass. The rulers remain very much as they were half a

century ago ; but the people have advanced with a rapidity, of which the former history of the world furnishes us with no similar example. The relations which once subsisted between the parties having changed, the institutions of society must change with them. A form of government to be stable, must be adapted to the intellectual and moral condition of the governed ; and when from any cause it has ceased to be so adapted, the time has come when it must inevitably be modified or subverted. These remarks seem to us to apply with special force to the present condition of many of the nations of Europe. I will proceed then, and remark some of the changes which this progress in intellectual improvement is effecting in their political condition.

II. We shall commence this part of our subject by remarking, that the various forms of government under which society has existed may, with sufficient accuracy, be reduced to two ; governments of will, and governments of law.

A government of will supposes that there are created two classes of society, the rulers and the ruled, each possessed of different and very dissimilar rights. It supposes all power to be vested by divine appointment in the hands of the rulers ; that they alone may say under what form of governments the people shall live ; that law is nothing

other than an expression of their will ; and that it is the ordinance of Heaven that such a constitution should continue unchanged to the remotest generations ; and that to all this, the people are bound to yield passive and implicit obedience. Thus say the Congress of Sovereigns, which has been styled the Holy Alliance : " All useful and necessary changes ought only to emanate from the free will and intelligent conviction of those, whom God has made responsible for power." You are well aware, that on principles such as these rest most of the governments of continental Europe.

The government of law rests upon principles precisely the reverse of all this. It supposes that there is but one class of society, and that this class is the people ; that all men are created equal, and therefore that civil institutions are voluntary associations, of which the sole object should be to promote the happiness of the whole. It supposes the people to have a perfect right to select that form of government under which they shall live, and to modify it at any subsequent time, as they shall think desirable. Supposing all power to emanate from the people, it considers the authority of rulers purely a delegated authority, to be exercised in all cases according to a written code, which code is nothing more than an authentic expression of the people's will. It teaches that the ruler is nothing

more than the intelligent organ of enlightened public opinion, and declares that if he ceases to be so, he shall be a ruler no longer. Under such a government may it with truth be said of law, that "her seat is the bosom" of the people, "her voice the harmony" of society; "all men in every station do her reverence; the very least as feeling her care, and the very greatest as not exempted from her power; and though each in different sort and manner, yet all with uniform consent, admiring her as the mother of their peace and joy." I need not add, that our own is an illustrious example of the government of law.

Now which of these two is the right notion of government, I need not stay to inquire. It is sufficient for my purpose to remark, that whenever men have become enlightened by the general diffusion of intelligence, they have universally preferred the government of law. The doctrines of what is called legitimacy, have not been found to stand the scrutiny of unrestrained examination. And besides this, the love of power is as inseparable from the human bosom as the love of life. Hence men will never rest satisfied with any civil institutions, which confer exclusively upon a part of society, that power which they believe should justly be vested in the whole; and hence it is evident that no government can be secure from the effects of increasing intelli-

gence, which is not conformed in its principles to the nature of the human heart, and which does not provide for the exercise of this principle, so inseparable from the nature of man.

We see then that the people under arbitrary governments, whenever they have become enlightened, must begin to desire some change in the existing institutions. On the contrary, it is not unreasonable to suppose, that to such change the rulers would every where be opposed. Instances have been rare in the history of man, in which the possessor of power, has surrendered it to any thing but physical force. The rulers every where will, to the utmost of their ability, maintain the existing institutions. This is not conjecture. The Holy Alliance has declared its determination to bring its whole power to bear upon any point, from which there was reason to fear the love of change, or in other words the love of liberty, would be disseminated. They have announced that "the powers have an undoubted right to assume an hostile attitude, in relation to those States in which the overthrow of governments may operate as an example."

You perceive then, that if the people in Europe have become dissatisfied with the government of will, and if the rulers have determined to support it, the present progress of intelligence must be rap-

idly dividing the whole community into two great classes. The one is composed of the monarchy, the aristocracy and the army, and in general of all those whose wealth, whose rank, or whose influence depend on the continuance of the existing system. The other is composed of the middling and lower classes of society, of the men who understand the nature of liberal institutions, and those who are groaning under the weight of civil and religious oppression. The question at issue is, whether a nation shall be governed by men of its choice, or by men whose only title to rule is derived from hereditary descent; whether laws shall be made for the benefit of a whole or a part; and whether they shall be the expression of a monarch's will, or the unbiassed decisions of an enlightened community. It is a question between precedent and right; between old notions and new ones; between rulers and ruled; between governments and people. It has already agitated Spain, Portugal, Italy, France, Germany, Prussia, and South America. Hence you see that the parties formed in those nations have all taken their names from their attachments to one or the other of these notions of government. Hence we hear of constitutionalists and royalists, of liberals and anti-liberals, of legitimates and reformers. It is in a word the same question, though modified by circumstances, which

wrought out the revolution under Charles I., and in which the best blood of this country was shed at Lexington and at Bunker-Hill, at Saratoga, and at Yorktown.

But we cannot pass from this subject without remarking another fact, which renders the present state of Europe doubly interesting to every friend of the religion of Jesus Christ. You are well aware that what is called Christianity is at the present day exhibited to the world under two very different forms. The one supposes man amenable to no created being for his religious opinions, and that provided he do not disturb the peace of society, he is perfectly at liberty to worship God after the dictates of his own conscience. It supposes, moreover, the Bible to be a sufficient and the only rule of faith and practice; a book of ultimate facts in morals, which is to be put in the hands of every one, which every one is at liberty to interpret for himself, and that with his interpretation neither any man nor body of men has any right to interfere. The other form, which also professes to be Christianity, supposes, on the contrary, that religious opinion must be subject to the will of man; and that for disbelieving the religion of the State, the citizen is justly liable to fine, disfranchisement, imprisonment, and death. It denies to man the right of reading the scriptures, and substitutes in their place monkish legends of fabulous miracles.

**It stamps the traditions and the decisions of men with the authority of a revelation from heaven, and thus places conscience, by far the strongest of those principles which agitate the human bosom and direct the human conduct, entirely within the control of ambitious statesmen and avaricious priests. You perceive I have alluded to the Protestant and Catholic forms of Christianity, as they generally exist on the continent of Europe.**

**These systems, as you must be convinced, depend upon principles very different the one from the other. The one pleads for the universal circulation of the scriptures ; the other, from its highest authority, forbids it. The one labours for the improvement of the lower classes of society, and lives and moves and has its being in the atmosphere of religious liberty ; the other has never been able to retain its influence over the mind any longer than whilst enforcing its doctrines by relentless persecution. And hence are the scriptures supposed to have designated this church by that awful appellation, "drunk with the blood of the saints." Here then we see that the adherents of these two systems must be at issue on that question, of all others dearest to man, the question of liberty of conscience.**

**But it is here of importance to observe, how nearly the line which is drawn in this division coincides with the other on the question of civil liberty, of which we have just spoken. The govern-**

ment of will has never been able to support itself without an alliance with the ecclesiastical power. Having no hold upon the understanding or upon the affections of man, it must control his conscience or it could not be upheld. And on the contrary, the Catholic religion cannot carry its principles into practice without the assistance of the civil arm. The State needs the anathema of the Church to check the spirit of inquiry, and the Church needs the physical power of the State, to silence by force when it cannot convince by argument. These systems are, as you see, the natural allies of each other ; and hence in fact have they always been found very closely united. Hence is it that we behold at present among the sovereigns of the Holy Alliance, so evident an attempt to re-establish the influence of the papal see ; and hence, to use the language of the CHRISTIAN OBSERVER,\* “ do we perceive throughout Europe the mournful advances of that superstitious and persecuting church, whose much abused power we had hoped was crumbling to decay.”

And on the contrary, it is equally evident, that popular institutions are inseparably connected with Protestant Christianity. Both rest upon the same fundamental principle, the absolute freedom of inquiry. Neither accepts of any support not derived from the suffrages of a free, intelligent, and

\* Ch. Observer, Vol. 24, p. 401.

virtuous community. Though each is perfectly independent, yet neither could long exist without giving birth to the other. And here, were it necessary, it would not be difficult to show that the doctrines of Protestant Christianity are the sure, nay, the only bulwark of civil freedom. A survey of the history of Europe since the era of the Reformation would teach us, that man has never correctly understood nor successfully asserted his rights, until he has learned them from the Bible; and still more, that those nations have always enjoyed the most perfect freedom, who have been most thoroughly imbued with the doctrines of Jesus Christ. But a discussion of this sort would lead us too far from the range of this discourse. Enough has, we trust, been said to convince you, that the very existence of Protestantism in Europe, is at stake on the issue of the question, which appears so soon about to agitate that continent.

And hence if the human mind only continues to advance with its present ratio of improvement, a general division of the people in Christendom seems inevitable. The questions at issue are the most momentous that can be presented, and the most active principles of the human heart must oblige every man to rank himself on the one side or the other. It is the question, whether man shall surrender up into the hands of other men those rights, which he holds immediately from God;

whether, in fact, he shall bow to nothing but law, or tremble at the frown of a despot. It is whether the human mind shall advance steadily onward in the career of improvement, or whether it shall lose all that it has gained, and sink back again into the gloom of monkish superstition. On the issue of this controversy depends the question, whether the light of divine revelation shall shine far and wide over our benighted world, pointing out to our fellow men the path to everlasting life; or whether that light shall be extinguished, and the generations which follow, the prey to a designing priesthood, shall be led in ignorance to everlasting woe.

Such seem to us to be some of the circumstances attending the present political condition of Europe. That two parties are forming in every country, you have abundant evidence; it is equally evident that the question on which they are divided is of the utmost magnitude; and that it is in every nation substantially the same.

In concluding, it may be worth our while to remark very briefly, the condition and the prospects of these two opposite parties.

1. As to their present state, we may observe, that the one has enlisted the greatest numbers, while the other wields the most effective force. The one comprises the lower and middling classes of society, which are of course by far the most numerous, and the other the rulers, and their im-

mediate dependents. The physical power of any nation always resides with the governed, and it is the governed who are the friends of free institutions. But it is to be remarked, that the millions who desire reform are scattered abroad over immense tracts of country, each one by his own fireside, without concert, and destitute of the means for organized operation; on the contrary, the force of the rulers is always collected, and can at any moment be brought to bear upon any portion of territory, in which there might appear the least movement towards revolution.

But the friends of popular institutions are opposed, in every nation, by more than the force of their own rulers. Whilst they are powerful only at home, the rulers are able to bring all their forces to bear upon a single point in any part of the civilized world. To accomplish this purpose, seems the principal design of the Holy Alliance; and hence they have pledged the physical force of the whole to each other, whenever the question shall be agitated in any country, on which depends the rights of the people.

2. If we compare their prospects, we shall find that the power of the popular party is increasing with amazing rapidity. Nations are already flocking to its standard. Fifty years ago and it could be hardly said to exist, only as the voice of indignant freemen was heard in yonder hall, the far

famed "cradle of liberty." From that moment, its progress has been right onward. A continent has since declared itself free. In the old world, the principles of liberty are becoming more universally received, more thoroughly understood, and more ably supported. Education is becoming every day more widely disseminated; and every man, as he learns to think, ranks himself with the friends of intellectual improvement. The trains of thought are already at work, which must operate important modifications in the social edifice, or that edifice, undermined from its foundations, must crumble into ruin.

And thus from these very causes, the other party is rapidly declining. Nations are leaving it. The people are loathing it. It cannot ultimately succeed, until it has changed the ordinances of heaven. It cannot prosper, unless it can check that tendency to improvement, with which God endowed man at the first moment of his creation. Every report of oppression weakens it. Every Sabbath School, every Bible Society, nay, every mode of circulating knowledge weakens it. And thus, unless by some combined and convulsive effort it should for a little while recover its power, it may almost be expected that within the present age it will fall before the resistless march of public opinion, and give place every where to governments of law.

## SERMON II.

### PSALM LXVII. 1, 2.

GOD BE MERCIFUL UNTO US, AND BLESS US, AND CAUSE HIS FACE  
TO SHINE UPON US; THAT THY WAY MAY BE KNOWN UPON EARTH,  
THY SAVING HEALTH AMONG ALL NATIONS.

PURSuing the train of thought which was commenced this morning, I shall proceed to consider the relation which this country sustains to the nations of Europe, and some of the duties which devolve upon us in consequence of this relation.

I. Let us consider the relation which this country sustains to the nations of Europe. Here we shall observe in the first place, that this country is evidently at the head of the popular party throughout the civilized world. The statement of a few facts will render this remark sufficiently evident.

1. This nation owes its existence to a love of those very principles for which the friends of liberty are now contending. Rather than bow to

oppression, civil or ecclesiastical, our fathers fled to a land of savages, determined to clear away in an inhospitable wilderness, one spot on the face of the earth where man might be free. *Ense petit placidam sub libertate quietem.*

2. This nation first proclaimed these principles, as the only proper basis of a constitution of government. Here was it first declared by a legislative assembly: "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness; that to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed; that whenever any form of government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of the people to alter or abolish it, and to institute a new government, laying its foundation on such principles, and organizing its powers in such form as to them shall seem most likely to effect their safety and happiness."

3. This nation first contended for these principles with perfect success. In other countries, attempts had been made to re-model the institutions of government. But in some cases, the attempt was arrested in its outset by overwhelming force; in others, the first movement had been succeeded

by anarchy ; anarchy gave place to military despotism, and this at last yielded to a restoration of the former dynasty. In our country first was the contest commenced in simplicity of heart, for the rights of man ; and when these were secured, here alone did the contest cease. Since our revolution, other nations have followed our example, and many more are preparing to follow it. But when the most glorious success shall have attended their struggle for liberty, they are but our imitators ; and the greatest praise of any subsequent revolution must be that it has resembled our own. Our heroic struggle, its perfect success, its virtuous termination, have rivetted the eyes of the people of Europe specially upon us, and they cannot now be averted. To us do they look when they would see what man can do ; and while sighing under their oppressions, yet hope to be free.

4. And lastly, our country has given to the world the first ocular demonstration, not only of the practicability, but also of the unrivalled superiority of a popular form of government. It was not long since fashionable to ridicule the idea, that a people could govern themselves. The science of rulers was supposed to consist in keeping the people in ignorance, in restraining them by force, and amusing them by shows. The people were treated like a ferocious monster, whose keepers could only

be secure while its dungeon was dark, and its chain massive. But the example of our own country is rapidly consigning these notions to merited desuetude. It is teaching the world that the easiest method of governing an intelligent people is, to allow them to govern themselves. It is demonstrating that the people, so far from being the enemies, are the best, nay, the natural friends of wholesome institutions. It is showing that kings, and nobles, and standing armies, and religious establishments, are at best only very useless appendages to a form of government. It is showing to the world that every right can be perfectly protected, under rulers elected by the people; that a government can be stable with no other support than the affections of its citizens; that a people can be virtuous without an established religion; and more than this, that just such a government as it was predicted could no where exist but in the brain of a benevolent enthusiast, has actually existed for half a century, acquiring strength and compactness and solidity with every year's duration. And it is manifest that no where else have men been so free, so happy, so enlightened, or so enterprising, and no where have the legitimate objects of civil institutions been so triumphantly attained. Against facts such as these it is difficult to argue; and you see they furnish the friends of

free institutions with more than an answer to all the theories of legitimacy.

It is unnecessary to pursue this subject further. You are doubtless convinced that this country stands linked by a thousand ties to the popular sentiment of Europe. We have no sympathies with the rulers. The principles, in support of which they are allied, are diametrically opposed to the very spirit of our constitution. All our sympathies are with the people; for we are all of us the people. And not only are we thus amalgamated with them in feeling, we are manifestly at the head of that feeling. We first promulgated their sentiments, we taught them their rights, we first contended successfully for their principles; and for fifty years we have furnished incontrovertible evidence that their principles are true. These principles have already girded us with Herculean strength, in the very infancy of our empire, and have given us political precedence of governments, which had been established on the old foundation, centuries before our continent was discovered. And now what nation will be second in the new order of things, is yet to be decided; but the providence of God has already announced, that, if true to ourselves, we shall be inevitably first.

Now to say that any country is at the head of popular sentiment, is only to say in other words

that it is in her power to direct that sentiment. You are then prepared to proceed with me, and remark, in the next place, that it devolves on this country to lead forward the present movement of public opinion, to freedom and independence.

It devolves on us to sustain and to chasten the love of liberty among the friends of reform in other nations. It is not enough that the people every where desire a change. The subversion of a bad government is by no means synonymous with the establishment of a better. A people must know what it is to be free; they must have learned to reverence themselves, and bow implicitly to the principles of right, or nothing can be gained by a change of institutions. A constitution written on paper is utterly worthless, unless it be also written on the hearts of a people. Unless men have learned to govern themselves, they may be plunged into all the horrors of civil war, and yet emerge from the most fearful revolution, a lawless nation of sanguinary slaves. But if this country remain happy, and its institutions free, it will render the common people of other countries acquainted with the fundamental principles of the science of government; this knowledge will silently produce its practical result, and year after year will insensibly train them to freedom.

But suppose that the spirit of freedom have

been sustained to its issue, the blow to have been struck, and either by concession or force, the time to have arrived when the institutions of the old world are to be transformed; then will the happiness of the civilized world be again connected most intimately with the destinies of this country. Ancient constitutions having been abolished, new ones must be adopted by almost every nation in Europe. The old foundations will have been removed; it will still remain to be decided on what foundations the social edifice shall rest. From the relation we now sustain to the friends of free institutions, as well as from all the cases of revolution which have lately occurred,\* it is evident that to this nation they will all look for precedent and example. Thus far our institutions have conferred on man all that any form of government was ever expected to bestow. Should the grand experiment which we are now making on the human character succeed, there can be no doubt that other governments, following our example, will be formed on the principles of equality of right. To illustrate the subject by an example;—who does not see, that if France had been illuminated in the era of her revolution by the light which our fifty years' experience has shed upon the world, unstained with the blood of three millions of her citizens, she might now have been rejoicing in a government of law?

\* Note B.

We have thus far spoken only of the effects which this country might produce upon the politics of Europe, simply by her example. It is not impossible, however, that she may be called to exert an influence still more direct on the destinies of man. Should the rulers of Europe make war upon the principles of our constitution, because its existence "may operate as an example;" or should a universal appeal be made to arms, on the question of civil and religious liberty;—it is manifest that we must take no secondary part in the controversy. The contest will involve the civilized world, and the blow will be struck which must decide the fate of man for centuries to come.

Then will the hour have arrived, when uniting with herself the friends of freedom throughout the world, this country must breast herself to the shock of congregated nations. Then will she need the wealth of her merchants, the prowess of her warriors, and the sagacity of her statesmen. Then, on the altars of our God, let us each one devote himself to the cause of the human race; and in the name of the Lord of Hosts go forth unto the battle. If need be, let our choicest blood flow freely; for life itself is valueless, when such interests are at stake. Then when a world in arms is assembling to the conflict, may this country be found fighting in the vanguard for the liberties of man. God him-

self hath summoned her to the contest, and she may not shrink back. For this hour may he by his grace prepare her.

How a contest of this kind would terminate, we should doubt, if our trust were in an arm of flesh. But we doubt not. We believe that the cause of man will triumph, because the Judge of the whole earth will do right. The wrath of man shall praise him, and the remainder of wrath he will restrain. And yet again we doubt not; for we believe that on the issue of this controversy, the dearest interests of the church of Christ are suspended. That day will decide, whether the light of revelation shall shine far abroad among the nations, or whether it shall be extinguished, and its place be supplied by the legends of a monkish superstition. We cannot believe that the blood of martyrs has flowed so much in vain. We cannot believe that God will suffer his church to go back again for ages, after he has showed her in these latter days, so many tokens for good. Therefore, though the kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together against the Lord and against his anointed, saying, Let us break their bands asunder and cast away their cords from us; he that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh; the Lord shall have them in derision. Then shall he speak unto them in his wrath, and vex them in his sore displeasure. For

he hath set his King upon his holy hill of Zion. God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. The Lord of Hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge.

And if the cause of true religion and of man shall eventually triumph, as we trust in God it will, who can tell how splendid are the destinies which will then await this country! One feeling, the love of liberty, will have cemented together all the nations of the earth. Though speaking different languages and inhabiting different regions, all will be but one people, united in the pursuit of one object, the happiness of the whole. And at the head of this truly holy alliance, if faithful to her trust, will then this nation be found. The first that taught them to be free; the first that suffered in the contest; the nation that most freely and most firmly stood by them in the hour of their calamity; —at her feet will they lay the tribute of universal gratitude. Each one bound to her by every sentiment of interest and affection, she will be the centre of the new system, which shall then emerge out of the chaos of ancient institutions. Henceforth she will sway for ages the destinies of the world.

Who of us does not kindle into enthusiasm as he contemplates the mighty interests connected with the prosperity of this country? With the success of our institutions, the cause of man through-

out the civilized world seems indissolubly interwoven. What, then, let us inquire, are THE DUTIES TO WHICH WE ARE SUMMONED BY THE RELATION THAT WE SUSTAIN TO OUR BRETHREN OF THE HUMAN RACE? This is the *last* topic to which I shall direct your attention.

And here it is scarcely necessary to remark, that it cannot be our duty to do any thing which shall at all interfere with the internal concerns of any other government. We should thus compromise the fundamental principle of our constitution, that civil institutions are to be established or modified only in obedience to the will of the majority. But this *will* can only be ascertained by allowing each nation to select for itself that form of government, which it shall choose. If the majority in any nation are willing to be slaves, no power on earth can make them free. It is certainly their misfortune; but physical force can do them no good. We may extend to them every facility for the dissemination of knowledge and of religion; this we owe them as brethren of the human race; and having done this, we must commit them to the decisions of an all-wise and holy Providence.

It is evident, then, that unless called to defend the cause of liberty in the field, all we can do for it must be done at home. Our power resides in the force of our example. It is by exhibiting to other

nations the practical excellence of a government of law, that they will learn its nature and advantages, and will in due time achieve their own emancipation.

The question, then, What can we do to promote the cause of liberty throughout the world? resolves itself into another, What can we do to ensure the success of that experiment which our institutions are making upon the character of man?

In answering it, it is important to remark, that whatever we would do for our country, must be done for **THE PEOPLE**. Great results can never be effected in any other way. Specially is this the case under a republican constitution. Here the people are not only the real but also the acknowledged fountain of all authority. They make the laws, and they control the execution of them. They direct in the senate, they overawe the cabinet, and hence it is the moral and intellectual character of the people which must give to the "very age and body of our institutions their form and pressure."

So long, then, as our people remain virtuous and intelligent, our government will remain stable. While they clearly perceive, and honestly decree justice, our laws will be wholesome, and the principles of our constitution will recommend them-

selves every where to the common sense of man. But should our people become ignorant and vicious; should their decisions become the dictates of passion and venality, rather than of reason and of right, that moment are our liberties at an end; and, glad to escape the despotism of millions, we shall flee for shelter to the despotism of one. Then will the world's last hope be extinguished, and darkness brood for ages over the whole human race.

Not less important is moral and intellectual cultivation, if we would prepare our country to stand forth the bulwark of the liberties of the world. Should the time to try men's souls ever come again, our reliance under God must be, as it was before, on the character of our citizens. Our soldiers must be men whose bosoms have swollen with the conscious dignity of freemen, and who, firmly trusting in a righteous God, could look unmoved on embattled nations leagued together for purposes of wrong. When the means of education every where throughout our country shall be free as the air we breathe; when every family shall have its Bible, and every individual shall love to read it; then and not till then shall we exert our proper influence on the cause of man; then and not till then shall we be prepared to stand forth between the oppressor and the oppressed, and say to the proud wave of domination, Thus far shalt thou go and no farther.

It seems then evident, that the paramount duty of an American citizen, is, to put in requisition every possible means for elevating universally the intellectual and moral character of our people.

When we speak of intellectual elevation, we would not suggest that all our citizens are to become able linguists, or profound mathematicians. This, at least for the present, is not practicable; it certainly is not necessary. The object at which we aim will be attained, when every man is familiarly acquainted with what are now considered the ordinary branches of an English education. The intellectual stores of one language are then open before him; a language in which he may find all the knowledge that he shall ever need to form his opinions upon any subjects on which it shall be his duty to decide. A man who cannot read, let us always remember, is a being not contemplated by the genius of our constitution. Where the right of suffrage is extended to all, he is certainly a dangerous member of community who has not qualified himself to exercise it. But on this part of the subject I need not enlarge. The proceedings of our general and State Legislatures already furnish ample proof that our people are tremblingly alive to its importance. We do firmly believe the time to be not far distant, when there will not be found a single citizen of these United States, who is not entitled to the appellation of a well informed man.\*

\* Note C.

But supposing all this to be done, still only a part and by far the least important part of our work will have been accomplished. We have increased the power of the people, but we have left it doubtful in what direction that power will be exerted. We have made it certain that a public opinion will be formed; but whether that opinion shall be healthful or destructive, is yet to be decided. We have cut out channels by which knowledge may be conveyed to every individual of our mighty population; it remains for us, by means of those very channels, to instil into every bosom an unshaken reverence for the principles of right. Having gone thus far, then, we must go farther; for you must be aware that the tenure by which our liberties is held can never be secure, unless moral, keep pace with intellectual cultivation. This leads us to remark in the second place, that our other and still more imperious duty is, to cultivate the moral character of our people.\*

On the means by which this may be effected, I need not detain you. We have in our hands a book of tried efficacy; a work which contains the only successful appeal that was ever made to the moral sense of man; a book which unfolds the only remedy that has ever been applied with any effect to the direful maladies of the human heart. You need not be informed that I refer to the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments.

\* Note D.

As to the powerful, I had almost said miraculous effect, of the sacred scriptures, there can no longer be any doubt in the mind of any one on whom fact can make an impression. That the truths of the Bible have the power of awakening an intense moral feeling in man under every variety of character, learned or ignorant, civilized or savage; that they make bad men good, and send a pulse of healthful feeling through all the domestic, civil and social relations; that they teach men to love right, to hate wrong, and to seek each other's welfare, as the children of one common parent; that they control the baleful passions of the human heart, and thus make men proficient in the science of self government; and finally, that they teach him to aspire after conformity to a Being of infinite holiness, and fill him with hopes infinitely more purifying, more exalting, more suited to his nature than any other, which this world has ever known; are facts incontrovertible as the laws of philosophy, or the demonstrations of mathematics. Evidence in support of all this can be brought from every age in the history of man, since there has been a revelation from God on earth. We see the proof of it every where around us. There is scarcely a neighbourhood in our country where the Bible is circulated, in which we cannot point you to a very considerable portion of its

population, whom its truths have reclaimed from the practice of vice, and taught the practice of whatsoever things are pure and honest and just and of good report.

That this distinctive and peculiar effect is produced upon every man to whom the gospel is announced, we pretend not to affirm. But we do affirm, that besides producing this special renovation to which we have alluded, upon a part, it in a most remarkable degree elevates the tone of moral feeling throughout the whole of a community. Wherever the Bible is freely circulated, and its doctrines carried home to the understandings of men, the aspect of society is altered; the frequency of crime is diminished; men begin to love justice, and to administer it by law; and a virtuous public opinion, that strongest safeguard of right, spreads over a nation the shield of its invisible protection. Wherever it has faithfully been brought to bear upon the human heart, even under most unpromising circumstances, it has within a single generation revolutionized the whole structure of society; and thus within a few years done more for man, than all other means have for ages accomplished without it. For proof of all this, I need only refer you to the effects of the gospel in Greenland, or in South Africa, in the Society

Islands ; or even among the aborigines of our own country.

But before we leave this part of the subject, it may be well to pause for a moment, and inquire whether, in addition to its moral efficacy, the Bible may not exert a powerful influence on the intellectual character of man.

And here it is scarcely necessary that I should remark, that of all the books with which, since the invention of writing, this world has been deluged, the number of those is very small which have produced any perceptible effect on the mass of human character. By far the greater part have been, even by their cotemporaries, unnoticed and unknown. Not many an one has made its little mark upon the generation that produced it, though it sunk with that generation to utter forgetfulness. But after the ceaseless toil of six thousand years, how few have been the works, the adamantine basis of whose reputation has stood unhurt amid the fluctuations of time, and whose impression can be traced through successive centuries on the history of our species.

When, however, such a work appears, its effects are absolutely incalculable ; and such a work, you are aware, is the *ILIAD OF HOMER*. Who can estimate the results produced by this incomparable effort of a single mind ! Who can tell what Greece

owes to this first-born of song. Her breathing marbles, her solemn temples, her unrivalled eloquence, and her matchless verse, all point us to that transcendent genius, who by the very splendour of his own effulgence woke the human intellect from the slumber of ages. It was Homer who gave laws to the artist; it was Homer who inspired the poet; it was Homer who thundered in the senate; and more than all, it was Homer who was sung by the people; and hence a nation was cast into the mould of one mighty mind, and the land of the Iliad, became the region of taste, the birth-place of the arts. Nor was this influence confined within the limits of Greece. Long after the sceptre of empire had passed westward, genius still held her court on the banks of the Ilyssus, and from the country of Homer gave laws to the world. The light which the blind old man of Scio had kindled in Greece, shed its radiance over Italy; and thus did he awaken a second nation to intellectual existence. And we may form some idea of the power which this one work has to the present day exerted over the mind of man, by remarking, that "nation after nation, and century after century has been able to do little more than transpose his incidents, new-name his characters, and paraphrase his sentiments."\*

\* Johnson. Preface to Shakespeare.

But considered simply as an intellectual production, who will compare the poems of Homer with the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testament. Where in the Iliad shall we find simplicity and pathos which shall vie with the narrative of Moses, or maxims of conduct to equal in wisdom the Proverbs of Solomon, or sublimity which does not fade away before the conceptions of Job, or David, of Isaiah, or St. John. But I cannot pursue this comparison. I feel that it is doing wrong to the mind which dictated the Iliad, and to those other mighty intellects on whom the light of the holy oracles never shined. Who that has read his poem has not observed how he strove in vain to give dignity to the mythology of his time? Who has not seen how the religion of his country, unable to support the flight of his imagination, sunk powerless beneath him? It is the unseen world where the master spirits of our race breathe freely and are at home; and it is mournful to behold the intellect of Homer striving to free itself from the conceptions of materialism, and then sinking down in hopeless despair, to weave idle fables of Jupiter and Juno, Apollo or Diana. But the difficulties under which he laboured are abundantly illustrated by the fact, that the light which he poured upon the human intellect taught other ages how unworthy was the religion of his day of

the man who was compelled to use it. "It seems to me," says Longinus, "that Homer, when he ascribes dissensions, jealousies, tears, imprisonments, and other afflictions to his deities, hath, as much as was in his power, made the men of the Iliad gods, and the gods men. To man when afflicted, death is the termination of evils; but he hath made not only the nature but the miseries of the gods eternal."

If then so great results have flowed from this one effort of a single mind, what may we not expect from the combined effort of several, at least his equals in power over the human heart? If that one genius, though groping in the thick darkness of absurd idolatry, wrought so glorious a transformation in the character of his countrymen, what may we not look for from the universal dissemination of those writings, on whose authors was poured the full splendour of eternal truth? If unassisted human nature, spell-bound by a childish mythology, have done so much, what may we not hope for from the supernatural efforts of pre-eminent genius, which spake as it was moved by the Holy Ghost?

To sum up in a few words what has been said. If we would see the foundations laid broadly and deeply, on which the fabrick of this country's liberties shall rest to the remotest genera-

tions ; if we would see her carry forward the work of political reformation, and rise the bright and morning star of freedom over a benighted world ; let us elevate the intellectual and moral character of every class of our citizens, and specially let us imbue them thoroughly with the principles of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

You are well aware that to carry into effect this design, is one of the objects in which good men of every denomination are now so actively engaged. Having observed that the precepts of the Bible take more immediate effect when repeatedly inculcated upon man by teachers set apart for this purpose, missionary societies have been formed to furnish such teachers to the destitute. Having found that the proportion of ministers of the gospel is lamentably insufficient to meet the wants of our increasing population ; they have formed societies, and endowed institutions, with the design of qualifying a greater number for the pastoral office. And again it has been observed, that youth is the season for instilling into man the elements of knowledge, and the principles of piety ; and hence the Christian world is universally engaged in the benevolent work of Sabbath school instruction. And here in passing I cannot but remark, that if indeed our country shall be saved from that ruin which has

awaited other republics, and shall move steadily onward in that career of glory which Providence has opened before her; next to the circulation of the scriptures, to the Sabbath school more than to any thing else, do I verily believe that salvation will be owing.

You see then that these institutions all have one common object in view, to elevate the intellectual and moral character of our people. Here is true philanthropy; here is Christian patriotism. And this is one reason why we so often present these charities to your notice. When therefore we ask you to aid us in circulating the Bible, in sending the gospel to the destitute, or in educating the ignorant, you must not look unkindly at us; for we plead the cause of our country, of liberty, and of man. Let us all unite in spreading abroad the means of knowledge and of religion; let us do our utmost to render our nation a church of our Lord Jesus Christ;

Then, how'er crowns and coronets be rent,  
A virtuous populace shall rise the while,  
And stand a wall of fire, to guard their native soil.

And lastly, I would urge you, my brethren, to activity in these labours of charity, by presenting at a single view, the momentous results with which they seem to me indissolubly connected; but I feel myself utterly incompetent to the task.

When I reflect that some of you who now hear me will see fifty millions of souls enrolled on the census of these United States ; when I think how small a proportion our present efforts bear to the pressing wants of this mighty population, and how soon the period in which those wants can be supplied will have forever elapsed ; when moreover I reflect how the happiness of man is interwoven with the destinies of this country ;— I want language to express my conceptions of the importance of the subject ; and yet I am aware that those conceptions fall far short of the plain, unvarnished truth. When I look forward over the long track of coming ages, the dim shadows of unborn nations pass in solemn review before me, and each, by every sympathy which binds together the whole brotherhood of man, implores this country to fulfil that destiny to which she has been summoned by an all-wise Providence, and save a sinking world from temporal misery and eternal death.

In view of all these considerations, let me again urge you to be in earnest in this cause. I would plead with you, instead of engaging in political strife, to put forth your hands to the work of making your fellow citizens wiser and better. I pray you think less of parties and more of your country ; and instead of talking about patriotism, to be

indeed patriots. And specially would I charge you to give to this cause not only your active exertions, but your unceasing prayers. Ye who love the Lord, keep not silence, and give him no rest, until he establish this his Jerusalem, and make her a praise in the whole earth. God be merciful to us and bless us, and cause his face to shine upon us; that his name may be known on earth, and his saving health unto all nations. And to him shall be the glory, forever. Amen.

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